

**CITY OF CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA
CITY COUNCIL**

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Byrne called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Roll call: Councilmembers Jeff Baron, Hans Buder, Alissandra Dramov, Mayor Pro Tem Delves, and Mayor Dale Byrne were present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

City Clerk Romero led the pledge of allegiance.

EXTRAORDINARY BUSINESS

A. Carmel High School Report Out - Juliette Norman, CHS Associate Student Body President, updated on events and happenings at the high school.

B. Non-Profit Spotlight - Carmel Youth Center - Keith Pagent, Carmel Youth Center (CYC) CEO gave an oral presentation on the youth programs, fundraising opportunities, and upcoming community events.

C. Proclamation Recognizing Two Public Works Employees - Councilmember Dramov read the proclamation recognizing Rene Aldama and Miguel Manzano for their heroic efforts for life saving actions.

D. Proclamation Recognizing May 18-24, 2025 as National Public Works Week - Councilmember Dramov read the proclamation.

E. Report from See Monterey - Rob O'Keefe, CEO of See Monterey, the County of Monterey's destination marketing organization, gave an update on their activities. His presentation covered marketing communications, social media, business development, and responsible travel initiatives.

PUBLIC APPEARANCES

Halla Rockwell

Will Rei

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. City Administrator - Thanked the finance staff for their efforts in preparing the recommended budget for tonight's meeting.

B. City Attorney - Reported that the Carmel Public Library Foundation's attorney is currently reviewing the architect's contract for the Harrison Memorial Library renovation project.

C. Councilmembers

Councilmember Baron - Reported there is a Community Meeting next Thursday, May 15th on Sea Level Rise and the Local Coastal Program and invited the public to come. He also reported that on May 22nd the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) will hold a community meeting in the Council Chambers regarding safe pedestrian and bike paths.

Councilmember Dramov - Reported that the California Coastal Commission postponed the public hearing to adopt the City's Wireless Telecommunications Ordinance.

Mayor Pro Tem Delves - Thanked City staff for providing the presentation slides for Council meetings early.

Mayor Byrne - Thanked all staff for the wonderful Earth and Arbor Day Celebration and said he was honored to present the two benches dedicated to Barbara Livingston and Jan Reimers. He also announced that April is volunteer month and encouraged everyone to get involved in some of the wonderful volunteer groups in the City.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Item 1 - Resolution 2025-041 adopting Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Fee schedule for Administrative Services, Community Planning and Building, Public Safety, Public Works, Community Activities and Library Services

Finance Manager Jayme Fields presented on the recommended Fee Schedule update for FY 25-26 for Administrative Services, Community Planning and Building, Public Safety, Public Works, Community Activities, and Library Services. She said that a new cost study is budgeted for the coming year, and staff will return with a potential fee waiver program for consideration.

Public Comment:
Donna Jett

Councilmembers Baron and Dramov suggested lowering tree maintenance fees to encourage resident upkeep, especially considering fire hazards. Acting Public Works Director Bilse noted that last year the Council reduced the tree maintenance fees to make them more affordable, and the proposed fee schedule maintains those lower fees. Councilmember Dramov noted that the fee to remove a tree is less than the fee to prune and suggested the pruning fee be reduced to at

least the same as the fee to remove a tree. Councilmember Baron questioned if appeal fees are being collected by Public Works for appeals to the Forest and Beach Commission. City Administrator Rerig suggested that the appeal fee be included in the next review of fees.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Delves to adopt the FY 25-26 Fee Schedule, with the amendment that the fee for tree pruning be reduced to \$205, seconded by Councilmember Baron, and approved 5-0-0-0 by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Councilmember Baron, Buder, Delves, Dramov, and Mayor Byrne

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

ORDERS OF BUSINESS

Item 2 - Receive the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Recommended Budget

Finance Manager Jayme Fields presented the recommended budget for FY 25-26 of \$43.2 million for Council's consideration and summarized key changes to the operating budget. She encouraged the public and Council to send any budget related questions by email and the responses will be presented at the budget workshop on May 21st.

Councilmembers discussed key budget concerns, focusing on:

- **Marketing Budget:** Concerns were raised about its size and the inclusion of the Sunset Center, with consensus that the Sunset Center should become more financially self-sufficient and meet its endowment obligations.
- **Capital Improvement Projects (CIP):** Council agreed that underinvestment in CIP has contributed to infrastructure deterioration and emphasized the need for increased spending, especially on long-term maintenance.
- **Revenue Strategy:** Council generally supported exploring new revenue sources and suggested using portions of the operational reserves and unassigned funds to address infrastructure needs.

Public Comment:

Karen Ferlito

Nancy Twomey

Maria Ruess

Mayor Byrne advocated for revisiting Charter City status to expand revenue options, emphasized the need for an IT audit for added security, and recommended hiring a full-time public relations officer. Councilmember Buder requested weekend library hours, noting the delay may stem from MOU constraints. Councilmember Dramov urged the development of a long-term facilities maintenance plan and supported maintaining operating costs at or below 90% of the budget.

Councilmember Baron questioned the transparency of TOT forecasting by Visit Carmel, citing a potential conflict of interest as they also receive city marketing funds.

Mayor Pro Tem Delves noted that the Financial Stewardship Ad Hoc Committee consisting of Councilmember Buder and himself has been focused on broader budget and policy oversight and said that “budget scrubbing” is handled by the City Administrator and department heads.

Staff received direction from Council to return at the May 21st Budget Meeting with answers to questions raised by Council and the public and to present an updated proposed budget.

RECESS

Council took a recess at 7:18 pm and returned at 7:41 pm.

Item 3 - Consideration of Resolution 2025-042, authorizing the City Administrator to enter into a Professional Services Agreement with Opticos for a not-to-exceed fee of \$180,000 to prepare objective design and development standards (ODDS) for multi-family residential, mixed-used residential, and accessory dwelling units.

City Administrator Rerig announced that this item will be postponed to June.

Item 4 - Receive a report regarding options for the future of ambulance services in Carmel-by-the-Sea, and direction to staff regarding an agreement to contract ambulance services with Monterey Fire as previously recommended by the City’s Ambulance Ad Hoc Committee

Assistant City Administrator Brandon Swanson presented a historical overview of the City's ambulance services. He then summarized the Monterey Fire Department's proposal to manage these services with an enhanced 24/7 staffing model and outlined the advantages and disadvantages of the existing model and offered options for the council's consideration. He reported that staff recommends the Council enter into a contract with the City of Monterey for ambulance services. Police Chief Tomasi and Fire Chief Miller answered questions from Council.

Public Comment:

Matt Nitensen

Donna Jett

Cindy Lloyd

Nancy Twomey

Karen Ferlito

Council discussion resumed. Council agreed that there is a great benefit to the community to team up with Monterey Fire to manage our Ambulance services and continue the great partnership it already has with Monterey Fire. Council emphasized that retaining the 201 rights is very important as is keeping our service and improving it and acknowledged that Monterey Fire has the expertise and personnel in managing the services.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Delves to direct staff to proceed with an agreement to contract ambulance services with Monterey Fire as previously recommended by the City's Ambulance Ad Hoc Committee, seconded by Mayor Byrne.

Councilmember Baron said he is hesitant to commit to a long-term agreement with Monterey Fire until he understands the lost revenue from Carmel Ambulance not charging for services that AMR, the only other ambulance service in the area charges. He said he supports the motion but would like to see these concerns addressed within a probationary period, and noted that two-thirds of ambulance calls are mutual aid calls made outside of Carmel.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Delves to direct staff to proceed with an agreement to contract ambulance services with Monterey Fire as previously recommended by the City's Ambulance Ad Hoc Committee, seconded by Mayor Byrne, and approved 5-0-0-0 by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Councilmember Baron, Buder, Delves, Dramov, and Mayor Byrne

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Item 5 - Discuss proposed changes to City Policy C89-02: City Council Meetings, Orders of Council, Agenda Packets, Minutes of Meeting and Agenda Distribution, and provide direction to the City Administrator

Council continued this item to a future meeting date.

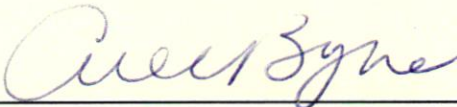
FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None

ADJOURNMENT

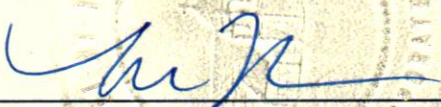
Council adjourned the meeting at 8:48 p.m.

APPROVED:



Dale Byrne, Mayor

ATTEST:



Nova Romero, MMC, City Clerk

